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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the center of our joy, give our lawmakers a passionate dependence on Your guidance. May they trust You so completely that they will patiently wait for the unfolding of Your prevailing providence. As they acknowledge that You direct their steps, strengthen them to confidently follow where You lead. May they strive to walk by faith, believing that their times are in Your hands. Lord, give them pure motives and a commitment to be faithful to You. Pursue them with Your blessings all the days of their lives as they seek to do what is right and fair.

We pray in Your righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jason Scott Miller, of Maryland, to be Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The deputy majority leader.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at his first official news conference 1 month ago, President Biden said:

I got elected to solve problems and the most urgent problem was COVID-19 and the economic disruption facing millions and millions of Americans.

If we were to measure President Biden using only those standards, the first hundred days of the Biden-Harris administration have been a historic success. But this new administration has done far more in its first hundred days than just tackle the pandemic; it helped small families and small businesses that are hurting financially because of the coronavirus.

President Biden is reestablishing America's role as a leader in the world and repairing alliances that were damaged dangerously under his predecessor. Equally important, Joe Biden is restoring credibility and dignity to the Office of the President itself.

As President Biden prepares to deliver his first joint address to Congress on Wednesday, it is worth considering how far we have come in 100 days.

President Biden inherited a nation torn apart by political division, an out-of-control pandemic, and an economy that was in a deep, deep hole. Hundreds of thousands of American small businesses had been closed when he took office. The pandemic caused most of this.

Millions of Americans had lost jobs. We lost 140,000 jobs in December alone.

President Biden promised aggressive government action to stop the spread of the coronavirus and to stabilize the economy, and he and the Democrats in Congress are making good on those promises.

Let's remember where we came from. When Joe Biden took office, the United States was averaging 195,000 new COVID infections every day, and 3,000 Americans were dying every day. Today, we have come down from 195,000 daily infections to 57,000 and from 3,000 COVID deaths every day to 700—still too many, but dramatic progress was made under this new President.

Remember where we came from. When Biden took office, the United States of America had one of the highest COVID infection rates in the world. Two numbers tell the story of the first year of COVID-19 infection under the previous President. The United States of America has about 5 percent of the world's population, but we had, when Biden took office, 20 percent—20 percent—of the COVID-19 infections in the world and 20 percent of the deaths. Now there is hope. This President listened to the medical experts—he didn't come up with his own theories of the case—and he expanded vaccine distribution.

The day Joe Biden took office, on that day, January 20 of this year, to that day, the United States had administered 1.6 million COVID vaccine shots total in the Nation, 1.6 million. We are now seeing 3 million vaccinations administered every day.

President Biden promised to deliver 100 million COVID-19 doses in his first hundred days. He didn't do that; he delivered 200 million doses. Forty percent of all Americans, the majority of U.S. adults, have had at least one dose of the vaccine. Every American over the age of 16 is eligible now for the coronavirus vaccination free of charge.

Greatly expanding COVID vaccinations and testing are at the heart of

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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